

Collectivity, Collective plural and Collective nouns in Macedonian

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Collectivity can be described by the following semantic features: plurality and wholeness, an entity with plural characteristics interpreted as a whole, emphasizing the common feature of all the elements comprising it. (Тополињска 1974:47). Collectivity functions based on the mutual influence of the plurality and singularity according to the features componentiality and wholeness. (ККЕЈ, 1990). Collectivity is a secondary function of plurality in Indo-European languages (cf. Kuryłowicz 1964)¹. The so-called collective function of plural formerly was signaled by the singular agreement of the verb², and today, in modern European languages collectivity is connected with singular form and agreement (Fiedler 1984: 263). Concerning Slavic languages collectivity is usually connected with the so-called collectives, collective nouns, and not with the plural³. All Slavic languages distinguish two types of collectivity: (A) a whole constituted of the elements themselves and (B) not only a whole constituted of the elements, but also some information about the order of the elements or some other information that is not a characteristic of the elements themselves (sp. Topolińska 1981: 72) . The (A) collectivity characterizes the so-called collective plural in Macedonian, and the collectivity (B) the so-called collective nouns.

1. Collective plural forms in Macedonian

In Macedonian grammars (Конески 1956 [1996]) collectivity is presented as a semantic category that gramaticalises its meaning in the collective plural forms⁴. The use of these forms is prescribed as plural agreement. Three endings are treated as collective

¹However, the conceptualization of the plurality started with matching the elements by contact and similarity, and than by matching the elements by similarity only. As a first stage of conceptualization there was the elliptic plural, after that the collective plural and finally the “mathematical” plural.

² There was a plural ending and a singular rection for the collective plurality, and a plural rection for the distributive plurality. That new type of collectives spread with the neuter gender substantives (Kuryłowicz 1964: 206).

³ Cf. Vaillant 1958.

⁴More details about the collectivity and the collective plural are in Koneski’s Grammar in Petroska (1999).

in Macedonian: *-je*; *-ja* *-uuūā* : masculine nouns *-je*; *-ja*; b) feminine nouns only *-je* and c) neuter nouns *-je* and *-ja*. But, there are examples with *-uuūā* as a regular plural ending (*ūaiūuuūā*, and the only plural ending); and examples of neuter nouns on *-ja* present a differentiation in meaning (*дрва* – only ‘trees’, but the regular plural form *дрва* –also ‘trees’ and ‘wood’). This differentiation in meaning makes the regular plural forms and collective plural forms to not have a clear differentiation⁵.

I will argue that the existence of the so-called collective plural in Macedonian does not present a grammaticalized category. Having a collective plural as a grammaticalized category should mean that: (1) there is an open derivation for collective plural forms, and (2) those forms have plural agreement and those forms should not be quantified by numerals⁶. There is no open derivation in Macedonian, there is only a definite list of nouns that take the so-called collective plural endings and they present two different situations: (1) they keep the collective meaning and (2) they lose that meaning and behave as regular plural forms.

There are examples of the so-called collective plural forms that do not have plural agreement⁷ and these forms must be treated differently depending on the ending *-je*, *-ja* and *-uuūā*. I will explain the present use of these forms in contemporary Macedonian: singular agreement for the *-je* collectives (masculine and neuter nouns) and *-ja* and *-uuūā* plural forms that are not collective.

The *-je* collectives can not be treated as plural forms. These are singular forms that have meaning of plurality and therefore are characterized as collective. So, *-je* should be considered as a collective suffix that impacts a collective meaning and should be treated separately from *-ja*. I want to prove this because it is not a part of the prescribed norm⁸ of the language. I tested these forms as plural or singular by using the following

⁵This neuter gender nouns show less difference between the collective and regular plural compared to the masculine nouns (cf. Конески 1956 [1996]: 259).

⁶ This criterion was presented by Topolińska (1981: 72).

⁷There is more information about the use of the collective plural forms on *-je* according to the “norm”, and that is plural agreement, in Корубин 1981 [1990], Минова-Гјуркова (1985/86; 1993 and 1994). For the use of the collective plural forms as singular forms in practise cf. Цветковски (1993: 219).

⁸ Корубин (1981 [1990]: 95) emphasizes that the singular agreement destroys the system and the “norm” of the Macedonian language.”

quantifiers: the collective quantifier *сио̄ӣ/се̄ӣа/се̄ӣо* that excludes the combinations with plural nouns denoting discrete elements of the set and emphasizes the wholeness or *целио̄ӣ/целӣа/цело̄ӣо* and; the distributive quantifier *сиӣе* that excludes the combination with singular nouns and emphasizes the individual discrete elements of the set that are also marked by ‘totality’.

1.1. The so-called collective plural with *-je* in Macedonian is collective singular (singular agreement – collective meaning):

Examples (1), (2), and (3) with singular agreement and (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) (10) (11) (12) prove that *-je* forms are collective singular⁹ and should not be called collective plural in Macedonian.

From the so-called collective plural forms, only the collective singular on *-je* has collective meaning and that meaning brings these forms close to the meaning of the other collective nouns in Macedonian.

(1) *Дрвје̄ӣо бешѐ влажно.; Дрвје̄ӣо се исушило.*
tree-Cpl- the was wet tree-Cpl-the dried-sg

(2) *Трње̄ӣо многу боцка.; Трње̄ӣо расӣе насекаде.*
thorn-Cpl-the a lot stings thorn-Cpl-the grows everywhere

(3) *Лисје̄ӣо е веќе ѓожолѣено.; Лисје̄ӣо ѓаза.*
leaf-Cpl-the is already yellow leaf-Cpl-the falls

(4) **Сиӣе лисје се веќе ѓожолѣени.*
All-D leaf Cpl are already yellow

(5) **Се исушија сиӣе корење.*
dried-pl all-D root Cpl

(6) **Сиӣе дрвје во гора̄ӣа изгора.*
All-D tree-Cpl in mountain-the burnt-pl

(7) **Сиӣе крилје им беа ѓоикасирени.*
All-D wing-Cpl them were trimmed

⁹This forms on *-je* with collective meaning (set as a whole), are collective singular forms, and are used and exist in contemporary Macedonian and have a “poetic nuance”.

(8) Се̄шо лисје е веќе йожолїено.
All-C leaf-Cpl is already yellow

(9) Се исуши се̄шо йрње.
dried-sg all-C thorn Cpl

(10) Се исуши се̄шо корење.
dried-sg all-C root Cpl

(11) Се̄шо дрвје во горага изгоре.
All-C tree-Cpl in mountain-the burnt-sg

(12) Се̄шо крилје им е извалкано.
All-C wing-Cpl them is dirty

1. 2. The so-called collective plural with –ja is a plural, but does not have collective meaning¹⁰ (plural agreement – distributive meaning):

Example (13) with a numeral presents this form as a plural:

(13) ...наликуваа на две огромни ййичји крилја.
looked like two big bird wing-Cpl

Examples (14) to (24) with сӣше as a distributive quantifier present these forms as a plural:

(14) Гранката пуштила неколку корења.
branch-the sprouted several root-Cpl

(15) Сӣше лисја се веќе йожолїени.
All-D leaf Cpl are already yellow

(16) Се исушија сӣше йрња.
dried-pl all-D thorn Cpl

(17) Се исушија сӣше корења.
dried-pl all-D root Cpl

(18) Сӣше дрвја во горайа изгореа.
All-D tree-Cpl in mountain-the burnt-pl

(19) Сӣше крилја им беа йойкасӣрени.
All-D wing-Cpl them were trimmed

(20) *Се̄шо лисја е веќе йожолїено.
All-C leaf-Cpl is already yellow

¹⁰ The nouns not having regular plural ending use –ja for making regular plural (камења ‘stones’).

(21) **Се исуши се̄ио ӣрња.*

dried-sg all-C thorn Cpl

(22) **Се исуши се̄ио корења.*

dried-sg all-C root Cpl

(23) **Се̄ио дрвја во гората изгоре.*

All-C tree-Cpl in mountain-the burnt-sg

(24) **Се̄ио крилја им е ио̄икасирено.*

All-C wing-Cpl them is trimmed

The *-ja* lost its collective meaning and is a variant of the regular plural ending (so, *лицја* is a plural variant of the *лиц̄и*₁ 'leaf' and *лиц̄иови* is the only plural form for *лиц̄и*₂ 'piece of paper')¹¹.

Slavic languages distinguish collective singular and collective plural according to Stankiewicz (1983: 280). The collective singular gives information about the whole, not about its elements. This fits perfectly for Macedonian forms on *-je* *лицје*, *дрвје*, *сно̄ије*, *класје*, *жарје*, *дабје*, *корење*, *ӣрвје* to be qualified as collective singular. Emphasizing the continuity of the elements makes the collective singular nouns close to the mass nouns, but it does not make them mass nouns (the continuity does not make the elements nondiscrete – the elements are presented as a whole of discrete elements). The collective plural presents the discrete and countable components of the whole and refers to personal and animate nouns that denote kinship, ethnic origin etc. According to Stankiewicz (1983) these nouns also have a relevant distinction between collective plural and collective singular where the difference is syntactic, for example¹² *gospoda se nije mešala s narodom* (collective singular) and *gospoda se jesu zavadila* (collective plural). Collective nouns with plural agreement can be qualified as collective plural¹³. If we compare this with the so-called collective plural forms on *-ja* and *-ӣӣӣа*, that are used as plural and can have a distributive quantifier *сӣӣе* and a numeral quantifier, it is clear

¹¹ If the collective plural forms are switched in use with the regular plural forms, there is no difference in the meaning of the plural.

¹² The example is from Stankiewicz (1983:280).

¹³ The collective plural are examples with a collective noun and a plural agreement, as the Macedonian example *Цело село ќе излезат да ѝе ӣрецекаат* (Конески, Б. 1956 [1996]). These examples give information that 'everyone in the village will get out', and the collective meaning is presented as distributive.

that these forms are not collective plural forms, but variants of the simple plural. Macedonian so-called collective plural forms and Croatian examples¹⁴ like *pilad, jagnjad* are usually considered as collective plural in Slavic languages. But, the so-called collective plural forms in Contemporary Macedonian on *-je* (*лусје, дрвје*) present a tendency to be treated as collective singular, as the Croatian examples do, with a preference to be used with singular agreement *Telad je pobjegla* compared to plural *Telad su pobjegla* (Pranjковић 1993: 21). We can come to the conclusion that the general tendency is to connect the collectivity with the singular agreement, meaning that from the stage of having two possibilities presenting collectivity, the collective plural and collective singular, the collective plural is a transitional stage that leads to collective singular (and collective nouns), or it leads to losing the collective meaning and becomes a regular plural form.

2. Collective nouns – collectivizers:

The (B) collectivity refers to collective nouns. There are three major groups¹⁵: a) collective nouns that emphasizes the features of the elements and do not have numeral quantification (**їейї млади́ни, *їри живи́ни, *їейї насе́ленија*); b) collective nouns that emphasize the features of the whole and do have numeral quantification (*їейї оркестїри, їри їарламенїа, две комисии*) and c) collective nouns that emphasize the collectivity itself and also have no restriction for numeral quantification.

These collective nouns can also be treated as secondary measure units and present names of more or less organized sets, while the name itself incorporates some contents that selects the possible elements of the set (*сїадо - живойїни*, herd - animals not *їїїици* birds etc.). This secondary units make the separate elements be seen as organized, natural or an intended set. That is why it would be best to call them collectivizers (колективизатори, Тополињска 1997:189). They collectivize the set that consists of individual elements, making it a collective, a set seen as a whole.

¹⁴ As in Stankiewicz (1983: 279).

¹⁵ According to Topolińska (1981: 75-77), there are four types, the first three will be mentioned here presented by Macedonian examples, and the fourth one brings collectivity close to the concept of mass nouns and is understood here as mass nouns (for example *зрав* 'beans').

The use of these nouns is especially interesting in Macedonian, because they form noun phrases where it is not clear which noun is the head of the noun phrase (*žryūa luže; cīado ovci; čēia vojnici*) compared to the Slavic languages with morphologically marked cases where it is known on the phrase level which noun is the head: *žryūa ljudi; čēia vojnika; cīado ovaца* (Serbian); *grupa ludzi; oddział żołnierzy; stado kòz* (Polish). In Macedonian these collectives sometimes can be used as heads where the wholeness of the set is emphasized, the collectivity of the noun phrase: *žryūa od novinari, īolīa od luže, jaiūo od ribi* where the preposition *od* marks the other noun as non-head and even in examples where the collectivisation is secondary *cīado od dvasesēt ovci*. In the languages with morphological cases the collective nouns are always the head of the phrase, as in the languages where the case has to be marked by a preposition *a group of people, a herd of cows*. But in Macedonian, the most common use is the noun phrase without a preposition and the singular or plural agreement on the sentence level gives information which noun is the head of the noun phrase.

There are two types of reference: A. noun phrases with a collectivizer as a head have singular agreement and their reference is intentional, they refer to the set as a whole, and B. noun phrases with collectivisers as non-heads and their reference is extensional, they refer to individual members of the set (Allan 1976: 107). The intentional reference corresponds to collectivity and extensional to distributivity.

The singular form of the collectivizer and the plural agreement seem to be in contradiction, but, the examples of connecting the text through anaphorization of the collective noun (explicit or implicit) with anaphoric pronouns in plural presents the possible distributivisation of the collective meaning. We have double anaphorisation here: 1. the collective noun behaves as an anaphoric pronoun and 2. the collective noun has been anaphorised (pronominalised) (Topolińska 1976: 57 and Feleszko 1980: 58). It is the same process as pronominalisation, the only difference is the fact that the anaphora is not a pronoun, it is a collective noun.

The examples show a connection of the parts in the text that have the first and the third noun phrase, without presenting on the surface the direct (second) phrase (the

members of the group: the people, the basketball players etc.). There is a collision between the anaphorised phrase (*žrujāiā; iimoi*) and the anaphoric phrase, explicit and implicit (*iue* or *-ai*) with the category of number. This is in collision with the principle for agreement of all the categories with the starting phrase, which is obligatory for anaphorizationa. Ex.:

(25) Се втрча по патот во пресрет на *žrujāiā*, *iio* *naближување*. Бргу се
 ran-3sg on road-the in meeting of group-the which was coming closer Quickly
 здружи со *нив*.

joined-3sg with them

‘He ran on the road to meet the group that was coming closer. He joined them quickly’

1. групата = групата луѓе (the group = the group of people)
2. луѓето од групата = нив (the people of the group = them)

(26) *Бријанската екипа* *екипа* е целосно опремена. *Доаѓаат* во Македонија со
 the British team is completely equipped coming-they in Macedonia with
 најсовремена опрема.

most contemporary equipment

‘The British team is completely equipment They are coming to Macedonia with the latest equipment.’

1. екипата = екипата стручњаци (the team = the team of experts)
2. стручњациите од екипата = тие (the experts of the team = they)

These previous examples can help in explaining why the constructions or noun phrases like *žruja deca* in Macedonian can have singular or plural agreement. This possibility of double agreement gives collective or distributive interpretation of the noun phrase. The reason for this double possibility is connected to the noun phrase itself not having the completely clear form (it doesn’t present which noun is a head of the phrase)¹⁶.

¹⁶ This double potential agreement is mentioned by Конески (1956 [1996]: 222) with the examples: *една žruja parizani se žovеше да tirне за Кичево и еден рој мисли ми врвва низ злава*. In Minova-Gjurkova’s *Syntax of Macedonian Standard Language* (2000: 198) she recommends a plural

The singular agreement presents collective meaning and the plural agreement distributive meaning.

2.1. Collective meaning of the noun phrases with collectivisers and the singular agreement:

There is singular agreement in different word orders and in cases with and without the collective noun being marked as definite. Here are examples of this type of noun phrases with the singular agreement.

2.1.1. Noun phrases are definite and the definiteness is always marked by the collective noun.

2.1.1.1. - as a subject in the sentence: the subject being in a position after the verb (дојде таа поголема група гости) and in a position before the verb (толпата селани се замава);

(27) Кога дојде џаа џо̀олема џруџа џосџи, ...
when came-sg that bigger group guests
'When that bigger group of guests came...'

(28) Толџаџа селани се замаа, закука, вресна, џисна, ...
crowd-the peasants fought-sg moaned-sg screamed-sg
'The crowd of peasants started to fight, moaned, screamed...'

2.1.1.2. - as a doubled direct object: џо здогледав џаџоџо диви џаџки; or doubled indirect object на моџава екиџа џеаџролози џ

(29) Го здогледав џаџоџо диви џаџки како леџа ...
CL-DO-sg saw-1sg flock-the wild ducks how flies
'I saw the flock of wild ducks flying...'

(30) На моџава екиџа млади и идни македонски џеаџролози џ "џаднаа"
To my-the team young and future Macedonian teatrologist CL-IO fell-3sg
базичните истражувања...
basic research-pl
'The basic research 'fell' to my team of young and future Macedonian teatrologists'

2.1.1.3. - as a relativised phrase (скоџскаџа џруџа навивачи, коџа):

agreement, e.s. agreement where "the basic noun" is the head (that is the plural noun that: *Груџа*

(31) Инцидентот се случил околу 21 часот, кога група навивачи од Битола, најпрвин нападнале еден, а потоа уште двајца припадници на скопската *џруја*
Skopje group

навивачи, која броела околу петнаесетина лица.

fan-pl RP-sg count-sg

‘The incident happened around 9 pm, when a group of fans from Bitola attacked one member first, and then two more members of the Skopje group of fans, that had around 15 people’

2.1. 2. Noun phrases with collectivizers that are not definite.

2.1.2.1. - as a subject in the sentence: the subject in a position after the verb (се појави една *џруја* војници) and in a position before the verb (*џруја* млади уметници експериментира):

(32) ... оздола се појави една *џруја* војници.

under appeared-sg one group soldier-pl

‘From down there a group of soldiers appeared’

(33) Група млади уметници сега експериментира ...

Group young artist-pl now experiment-3sg

‘A group of young artists is experimenting now’

2.2. Distributivisation of the noun phrases with collectivisers and the plural agreement:

The plural agreement with these phrases is considered as typical for Macedonian¹⁷ and it is possible because the plural nouns that present the set units are the heads of the phrases and the agreement with the verb is plural. That makes the collective meaning of the collective noun to be distributivized, so the phrase that takes plural agreement has distributive meaning. This agreement is possible in different word orders, with the noun phrase before (34), (35) and after (36), (37) the verb, but always with noun phrases that are not definite. In these examples with plural agreement the collective nouns function syntactically as numerals (how many surgeons? - as many as a group).

австралиски научници ја потврдија вестта).

¹⁷ It was mentioned before that in the other Slavic languages the plural agreement is not possible, due to the clearly determined function of the collective noun as a head of the noun phrase, except in Macedonian and

(34) *Група орални хирурзи* од Стоматолошкиот факултет при
group oral surgeons from Stomatology faculty by

Калифорнискиот универзитет во Лос Анџелес неодамна *објавија...*
Californian university in LA recently announced-3pl
'A group of oral surgeons from the Faculty of Stomatology at UCLA recently announced...'

(35) ... *група актери се собираат* во еден театар да прават претстава...
group actor-pl gathered in a theatre to make-3pl play
'A group of actors gathered in a theater to make a play...'

(36) Сценариото ќе го *пишуваат* група *помлади луѓе*.
Screenplay-the will CL-DO write-3pl group younger people
'A group of young people is going to write the screenplay'

(37) ... *долетоа цел рож ѝчели* ...
flew-3pl whole swarm bees
'A whole swarm of bees flew'
- as a relativised phrase:

(38) Научниците ги проучиле податоците добиени од *испитаната група жени*
from examined group woman-pl
на возраст од 56 и 71 година, *кои* пред десет години *зеле* дополнителна доза на
vitamin C. RP-pl took-3pl
'The scientists have studied the data from the examined group of women, age 56-71, that ten years ago took an extra dose of Vitamin-C'

(40) ... *групата испитаници што држеле* медитеранска диета четири години...
group-the examinee-pl RP hold=3pl
'the group of examinees that was/were on Mediterranean diet four years'

An interesting example is (31) where the plurality is introduced as distributive (*нападнале*), and it refers to *fans as a group*, and later, the plurality is presented as collective (*која броела*) and refers to *the Skopje group*. It is obvious that the marked definiteness of the collective noun influences the singular agreement and the interpretation of the set as collective.

even in Bulgarian. Example for Bulgarian: *Група студенти влязоха в двора на Универзитета*

(41) Курдскиот сепаратистички лидер Абдула Очалан, кој веќе еден месец се наоѓа во затвор на островот Имрали, во Мраморното море, ќе го бранат 16 адвокати, соопшти вчера неговиот главен адвокат.

16 lawyers

По враќањето од Имрали, каде се сретна со својот клиент Очалан, адвокатот им изјавил на новинарите дека уапсениот курдски водач се согласува со идејата за зголемување на шестина адвокати *што ќе го бранат /брани*.

team-the lawyers RH will CL-DO defend-pl/sg

‘Sixteen lawyers will defend the Kurdish separatist leader, Abdullah Ochalan, who is in a prison for a month already on the island Imrally, in the Marble Sea.

After returning from Imrally, where he met his client Ochalan, his lawyer announced that the imprisoned Kurdish leader agrees with the idea to make the team of lawyers bigger that are/is going to defend him.’

The topic in this last sentence is *адвокати* (distributive plurality) because that referent is also a topic of the previous sentence (*16 адвокати*). Without the previous sentence the topic would have been *the team*, not *the lawyers*, because the referent team is definite. Having the possibility to also use a singular agreement we are foregrounding the team (the collectivity). We can say that the difference between the two variants is in their thematic meanings¹⁹, but they both have the same propositional meaning. That means ‘it is true that the team consisting of lawyers will defend him and at the same time that the lawyers who make a team will defend him’. The collectivity and distributives are in complementary distribution, noun phrases with collectivizer can present collective or distributive plurality.

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¹⁹ For the meaning of the *thematic meaning* cf. Lyons (1995:154).

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